

PMC-ND  
(1.08.09.13)

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY  
OFFICE OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY  
NEPA DETERMINATION**



**RECIPIENT:** South Table Mountain PV Central Array Testing Site East (PV CATS East), NREL      **STATE:** CO  
Tracking No. 18-008b

**PROJECT TITLE** NREL  
:

<b>Funding Opportunity Announcement Number</b>	<b>Procurement Instrument Number</b>	<b>NEPA Control Number</b>	<b>CID Number</b>
	DE-AC36-08GO28308	NREL-18-008b	GO28308

**Based on my review of the information concerning the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (authorized under DOE Order 451.1A), I have made the following determination:**

**CX, EA, EIS APPENDIX AND NUMBER:**

Description:

<b>DOE/EA-1968 (NREL STM)</b>	SITEWIDE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT, U.S. DOE NATIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY LABORATORY, SOUTH TABLE MOUNTAIN CAMPUS, GOLDEN, COLORADO
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**Rationale for determination:**

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide funding to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) to develop a second photovoltaic (PV) testing site at the South Table Mountain (STM) campus in Golden, Colorado. The purpose of the proposed project is to construct a Regional Test Center (RTC) for PV deployment by RTC partners, known as PV CATS East.

The proposed project would occur in two phases. Phase I: Geotechnical/Engineering Recommendations would involve a geotechnical investigation, and any activities needed to prepare the site for the geotechnical work, to provide engineering recommendations needed to properly develop the site. Phase II: Installation would involve the development and installation of the infrastructure for PV CATS East based on the geotechnical engineering recommendations resulting from Phase I activities. Phase I activities were analyzed under a separate NEPA review, NREL-18-008a, which was signed by the NEPA Compliance Officer on 1/18/2018. Phase 1 activities have been performed and a design for the proposed test site is now available, and this NEPA review analyzes Phase II activities.

The site would measure approximately 250 feet by 150 feet, and would be located to the east of the existing PV CATS facility. The test area would be surrounded by a 4 foot high fence, and an approximately 10 foot wide gravel access road would be installed at a later date on the west and north side of the test site (within the fenced area) to facilitate access to the test rows.

Research partners would install PV test array framing and test articles with driven piers. Approximately 8-15 rows of single axis tracking PV racks would be installed, and each row would be approximately 80 feet long, spaced 15 to 20 feet apart and support 20-30 300-watt panels. Electrical and data connections would be made by trenching underground conduits to existing infrastructure located approximately 400 feet to the southwest of the proposed project site. Concrete utility pads, communications/data connectivity, and a 430V 3 phase electrical service panel would also be installed to support the PV test area. In accordance with NREL policies and procedures, sidewalks, curbs, and asphalt disturbed during construction would be replaced, and disturbed vegetated areas would be reclaimed.

The proposed test area would be temporary and would be in place for a period of up to ten years. At the conclusion of outdoor PV testing at the site, the site would be reclaimed in accordance with NREL policies and procedures.

DOE initiated consultation with the Colorado State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) on March 29, 2018 per Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for potential impacts to historic properties. The SHPO concurred

with DOE's finding of "No Historic Properties Affected" on April 19, 2018.

Project activities would not affect threatened or endangered species, wetlands, floodplains, or prime farmlands and no permits would be required. A migratory bird nesting survey would be completed if project activities occur between March 15 and September 15. If nests or eggs are found, the area would be cordoned off with a proper buffer until nestlings fledge. All ground disturbing activities would be conducted in accordance with existing corporate policies and procedures.

During construction, excavation of the trench would create dust/particulate emissions, and mobile air emissions would result from construction equipment such as dump trucks, skid steer, and pickup trucks. These impacts would be negligible and short-term. Similarly, emissions levels would increase during decommissioning of the test area; these impacts would be negligible and short-term.

Individuals working on this project could be exposed to physical and electrical hazards during the course of this project. Existing corporate health and safety policies and procedures would be followed including employee training, proper protective equipment, engineering controls, and monitoring. Additional policies and procedures would be implemented as necessary if new health and safety risks are identified. Traffic control measures would be used as needed.

Based on review of the project information and the above analysis, DOE has determined the proposed project would not have a significant individual or cumulative impact to human health and/or the environment. DOE has determined the proposed action is consistent with and bounded by the activities that are analyzed in the Department of Energy's STM Site-Wide Environmental Assessment (DOE/EA-1968) and FONSI.

#### NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination for this award

Insert the following language in the award:

If the Recipient intends to make changes to the scope or objective of this project, the Recipient is required to contact the Project Officer, identified in Block 15 of the Assistance Agreement before proceeding. The Recipient must receive notification of approval from the DOE Contracting Officer prior to commencing with work beyond that currently approved. If the Recipient moves forward with activities that are not authorized for Federal funding by the DOE Contracting Officer in advance of a final NEPA decision, the Recipient is doing so at risk of not receiving Federal funding and such costs may not be recognized as allowable cost share.

Insert the following language in the award:

You are required to:

A migratory bird nesting survey will be completed if project activities occur between March 15 and September 15.

Note to Specialist :

NREL  
Nicole Serio 4/25/2018

#### SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



Kristin Kerwin

Date: 4/25/2018

NEPA Compliance Officer

#### FIELD OFFICE MANAGER DETERMINATION

☐ Field Office Manager review required

#### NCO REQUESTS THE FIELD OFFICE MANAGER REVIEW FOR THE FOLLOWING REASON:

- ☐ Proposed action fits within a categorical exclusion but involves a high profile or controversial issue that warrants Field Office Manager's attention.
- ☐ Proposed action falls within an EA or EIS category and therefore requires Field Office Manager's review and determination.

#### BASED ON MY REVIEW I CONCUR WITH THE DETERMINATION OF THE NCO :

Field Office Manager's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

